

TO: **President's Council**
FROM: **CCRI Little "big audit" Committee**
DATE: **July 15, 2003**
SUBJ: **Findings to date**

The President's Council established the Little "big audit" Committee in the spring of 2003. The committee was charged with the duty to perform a self assessment of the College's operations and to make recommendations that would increase revenues, decrease costs or improve operating effectiveness.

In its first phase the committee asked the College Community to submit suggestions that would meet the above noted criteria. To date we have received a total of 103 ideas from numerous staff and faculty.

The Committee has met several times and has reviewed approximately 50 ideas. In its first report the Committee is recommending the actions noted below be considered by the President's Council.

The ideas have been listed by type of recommendation. A brief description of each type of recommendation precedes the ideas.

The Committee is in favor of the following ideas and requests the President's Council consider adopting the recommended actions noted below:

Idea # 1:

CCRI should hire a firm to review its vendor payments in order to find payment errors to generate funds for the school that would otherwise never be returned by the vendor.

Recommended Action:

If practicable, have CCRI enter into a contract with a firm that specializes in reviewing vendor payments to find payment errors that might result in funds being returned to the school.

Comment - We suggest starting with a pilot project at the CCRI Bookstore.

Rational:

There is no charge for this service; the firm takes a percentage of any funds that we would collect. We are suggesting a pilot program in order to determine if the process is effective.

Idea # 12:

Implement a \$5 registration fee for all non-credit course offerings.

Recommended Action

The Committee has been made aware that the Division of Life Long Learning is currently discussing the possibility of implementing a registration fee. The Committee would recommend the President's Council encourage the Division of Life Long Learning to implement a registration fee (minimum of \$5) for all non-credit course offerings. The Committee also believes that the registration fee should apply to regular non-credit courses, motorcycle, lead, asbestos, CDL, bus driver, and other training programs offered that are not contract based and where legislative approval is not required.

Rational:

A registration fee would generate additional general revenues to help defray the costs of the registration and payment processes.

Idea # 19

Consolidate Central Stores Inventory to minimize the amount of funds invested in the inventory.

Recommended Action

Implemented - The department director adopted the suggestion.

Idea # 22:

Establish a College wide campaign to conserve electricity and thus reduce costs.

Recommended Action

President's Council should consider appointing a committee to establish a campaign to foster energy conservation at all campuses.

Idea # 28:

Study feasibility of outsourcing certain functions such as printing and the help desk.

Recommended Action

Based on limited research it would not be cost effective to outsource the printing and/or the helpdesk functions. However, we do recommend that the Print Shop stop printing letter head stationary (except for bulk mailings). The Public Relations Office could create a standard CCRI stationary template in MS Word. To create its own stationary, departments could obtain the stationary template and add the Department name in the appropriate location.

Rational:

The College previously went out to bid to outsource the help desk function and the results was a multimillion dollar proposal. The Committee discussed outsourcing the Print Shop functions and it believes that we should continue to perform some of these functions while we have the personnel and the equipment. However, there usually is a backlog in the Print Shop so to reduce the backlog we are recommending that the College department's produce their own letter head stationary.

Idea # 33:

Seek permission to increase the delegated purchasing authority at all three schools. This increase in purchasing authority would allow for better flexibility and improved effectiveness.

Recommended Action

We recommend that the President's Council request the Commissioner of Higher Education to establish a task force to work on obtaining approval from the state to increase the delegated purchasing authority at all three schools.

Idea # 39:

Install a switch to correct a construction error that resulted in the lights always being on in room 2098.

Recommended Action

Implemented - The College electrician installed switches that now allow the lights to be turned off.

Idea # 42:

Move Security to the Commons area at all campuses and increase patrols of parking lots in the evening.

Recommended Action

Require that there be a greater visible presence of security officers at all campuses and parking lots, especially when classes are in session.

Rational:

To help meet the needs expressed in the Noel Levitz and the NEASC reports.

Idea # 47:

Provide appropriate staff with additional training in working with and controlling the HVAC systems at all campuses.

Recommended Action

Authorize additional HVAC training for the appropriate Physical Plant staff.

Rational:

The Physical Plant directors and the College Engineer indicated that they also believe that the staff should receive additional training in operating the HVAC system. They believe that the additional training would help the staff to run the systems more effectively. If the systems are run more effectively the College could not only save money but it may also provide a better working environment.

Idea # 49:

Prevent misuse of state motor vehicles.

Recommended Action

Authorize appropriate staff to develop and implement a formal policy regarding the appropriate use of State motor vehicles. The policy could require that each employee who is allowed to use a state vehicle sign off on the policy document indicating their understanding of the policy.

Rational:

Such a policy would minimize any questions regarding what is proper use of state vehicles. Having the employee sign the policy form will document that he/she is familiar with the policy.

The Committee has performed some preliminary reviews and is in favor of the following ideas and requests that the President's Council establish committees to perform an in-depth study of the merits of each idea noted below:

Idea # 2:

Explore the possibility of implementing energy savings through the use of Solar or Wind energy.

Recommended Action

Determine if savings can be generated through the use of Solar or wind energy as part of any future campus renovation or construction projects. **Comment** – CCRI could explore possible energy grant opportunities with the new grant writer.

Idea # 4:

Hire an employee, whose exclusive duty is to collect funds from students who have outstanding balances owed to CCRI.

Recommended Action

Determine if hiring an employee to work exclusively on collecting outstanding student receivables would bring in additional funds that would not only pay for the position, but would bring in additional funds that the College would otherwise probably never collect. **Comment** - This would require a new position. The College already sends old outstanding receivables to a collection agency, but the receivables are quite old when they are assigned.

Idea # 10:

Convince the State to reduce the Assessed Fringe Benefit rate that is currently being charged to all 3 schools.

Recommended Action

Request the Commissioner of Higher Education to establish a task force to study this matter. If appropriate, the task force would develop a proposal to be submitted to the State in an attempt to seek a reduction in the assessed fringe benefit rate that we are currently being charged.

Rational:

When faculty at all three schools terminate or retire they do not receive any vacation pay. When faculty at RIC and URI retire they do not receive any reimbursement of any accumulated sick time. CCRI faculty members who retire receive 15% of sick time balances when they retire. Based on this information it would appear that the three schools are being overcharged by the state.

Back Ground:

An amount equal to 3.8% of every payroll is paid by all state agencies to the State. The State utilizes these funds to pay for the costs related to employee termination/retirement, unemployment and workers comp costs. The fund does not cover the BOGHE Early Retirement Severance payments.

Idea # 11:

Offer popular courses at less popular time slots in order to offer less popular courses during more popular time periods.

Recommended Action

Determine if offering popular courses during time slots that are not popular with the students, would make more rooms available during prime time to schedule courses that are not as popular to hopefully improve classroom usage.

Idea # 17:

In order to improve efficiency at URI and CCRI we should seek approval from the state to allow CCRI and URI to take over the Personnel and the State Payroll functions from the State.

Recommended Action

The President's Council along with officials from URI should request the Commissioner of Higher Education to establish a task force to conduct a study and if appropriate seek permission from the state to take over the Personnel and Payroll functions. **Comment** – At the current time RIC is not interested in taking over these functions.

Rational:

Currently it takes a significant amount of time for the State Personnel Office to review, approve and process new hires and personnel changes. This process is a duplication of effort because the University and CCRI have already gone through its own review and approval process. Additional efficiencies would be recognized if URI and CCRI were also responsible for processing the bi-weekly payroll, because the posting of each organization's payroll information to the financial records system would be updated directly from the integrated internal payroll system.

Idea # 26:

Purchase new state vehicles to save money on maintenance costs.

Recommended Action

Have appropriate staff determine if funds spent to maintain some of the older State vehicles could be put to better use in purchasing new vehicles. **Comment** - We may need to convince the State's Office of Administrative Services before we are allowed to purchase new vehicles.

Idea # 29:

Reduce Overtime in Security and Maintenance areas.

Recommended Action

Study overtime incurred in the Security and Physical Plant areas to determine if it can be reduced while not compromising safety at the campuses.

Idea # 31:

Hire more positions to be flexi time.

Recommended Action

Conduct a study to determine if hiring new staff and faculty for certain departments to cover **evening** and **weekend shifts**, rather than the normal 8am to 4pm shift, will decrease costs by reducing the number of part time employees that need to be hired or reduce overtime paid without negatively impacting the day time operations.

Idea # 32:

Hire more employees to work day into evening hours.

Recommended Action

Conduct a study to determine if hiring some staff and faculty for certain departments on a flex time basis, **day into evening** (12pm to 7pm), will decrease costs by reducing the number of part-time employees that are needed without negatively impacting the day time operations. Combine this study with the previous study.

Idea # 35:

Student advising.

Recommended Action

Conduct a study to determine how CCRI could improve student advising in order to address the issues noted in the Noel-Levitz report and the NEASC report. **Comment** - This project might be assigned to the newly formed Enrollment Management committee. One suggestion would be to offer faculty some type of incentive such as release time to perform this function.

Idea # 37:

Limit certain program specific offerings to a single campus.

Recommended Action

Determine if limiting certain program offerings (Office Administration; MLT, Phlebotomy, etc.) to a single campus would allow for better usage of existing facilities and equipment without negatively impacting students

Idea # 38:

Review all cross campus duplications.

Recommended Action

Determine if it would be in the best interest of the College to eliminate all cross campus duplicate course offerings that are scheduled at the same time and day.

Idea # 54:

Bring some revenues in with a Dunkin Doughnut, TCYB or some other food vendors.

Recommended Action

Determine if it is feasible to establish a food court type dining system? Would such a food service program generate revenues equal to what the current system is generating? Any switch in this regard would also require that a flexible catering service be available and that a certain amount of price controls be in place to prevent an operator from charging higher prices on campus than is charged at an off campus location. Please note that the current 5 year food service contract needs to be bid before the end of August 2003. It will be bid with a year-to-year renewal so that the food court concept can be studied. **Comment** - Same as idea # 72.

The Committee is in favor of the following suggestions but believe they should be put on hold while the Banner System is being implemented.

Idea # 15:

Have CCRI implement and run its own deferred payment plan to generate additional revenues. This function would require one additional employee (FTE).

Idea # 21:

Implement a pilot purchase card program to cover purchases below \$500 and thereby improving efficiency by reducing paper work and the time it takes to process a purchase order.

Idea # 24:

Implement an internet based time card or employee ID card based on an electronic time clock to reduce data entry time.

Recommend that the idea be adopted only when the school is in very bad financial position.

Idea # 5:

Pay off existing bonds of 1973 and realize a one time influx of cash of approximately \$800,000.

Comment - This would result in a one time benefit, because the State would likely reduce the College's state appropriation in future years by approximately \$350,000 to reflect the annual revenues that would be generated from the bookstore, dining services and the student union fees that are currently restricted by the bond indenture.

These issues will require substantial effort to perform a complete study, hold for possible review in the future.

Idea # 8:

Conduct a study to determine if changing to a trimester basis would generate more revenues than the current tuition structure.

Idea # 9:

Conduct a study to determine if it would be feasible to change to a program based tuition policy in order to generate more revenues from those programs that are expensive to run.

Idea # 16:

Conduct a study to determine if offering students a discount for paying their bills early would reduce late payments and reduce lines during in person registration. **Comment** - Same as idea # 60.

These related topics should be addressed as part of a comprehensive phase two review.

Idea # 14:

Study the need to have more than one janitor/maintenance staff perform tasks that could be performed by one individual.

Idea 20:

Review work assignments in the physical plant area to determine if they can be assigned in a more cost effective manner.

Idea 44:

Use CCRI Physical Plant personnel to complete some tasks that are currently being outsourced.

Comment - We received a second idea # 48 to do the same thing.

The Committee does not recommend that the following ideas be adopted for the reasons noted in the "rational" sections.

Idea # 3:

Charge grants a facility use fee.

Rational:

A facility use fee is an internal charge and is considered to be covered by indirect costs; as a result State and Federal funding sources do not allow facility use fees as a direct charge to grants.

Idea # 6:

Implement an Add/Drop fee in order to cover the administrative cost incurred and to reduce the number of adjustments that students make.

Rational:

The College implemented a \$5 add/drop fee several years ago and it did not stop students from making adjustments.

Idea # 13:

In order to raise funds that could be used to address student parking and related safety issues that were noted in the Noel-Levitz report implement a student parking fee or increase the registration fee. **Comment** - These funds would be set aside to make improvements to the parking facilities.

Rational:

The consensus of the Committee was not to add another student fee.

Idea # 18:

Qualified staff required to teach one course per year as part of their normal work load.

Rational:

A majority of the Committee did not agree with this idea. **Comment** - There may also be some personnel issues that would need to be addressed.

Idea # 23:

Repair and sell old computer units. Similar to idea number 78.

Rational:

CCRI currently recycles usable computers within the College; any remaining units are obsolete and have no value.

Idea # 25:

Close building from 11pm to 7am to save energy.

Rational:

Per a discussion with the physical plant manager some cleaning staff do not leave until 2am therefore, there would only be minor saving from reduced lighting, the heat can not be shut off because of the lead time needed to bring the temperature back to normal.

Idea # 30:

Have grant employees perform certain functions such as advising or counseling for non grant clients.

Rational:

Most Federal and State grant programs do not allow grant employees to work with clients that are not grant participants.

Idea # 34:

Pursue eliminating State mandated FTE caps.

Rational:

The system of higher education is continually trying to convince the State Legislature to eliminate or modify the FTE cap requirement.

Idea # 36:

Install more projectors in classrooms to eliminate mobile units.

Rational:

This recommendation will be brought to the attention of the ITAC committee.

Idea # 41:

Charge students taking Comp I in room 1830 (computer classroom) a lab fee.

Rational:

It is not equitable to charge only one or two sections of a course a lab fee. In addition, such a change in policy would require a modification to the billing system and there is currently a moratorium on computer enhancements.

Idea # 43:

Make use of federal and state surplus property.

Rational:

Our research indicated that we are utilizing State Surplus property to the extent practicable. We were told that the State Surplus facility is not well organized and it is very difficult to find merchandise that is in good working order. We did not investigate the availability of Federal Surplus property.

Idea # 45:

Replace paper towels in lavatories with electric hand dryers.

Rational:

Our research indicated that some years ago the use of electric hand-dryers was piloted at the Flanagan campus and it was determined that they were more costly than paper towels, because they were frequently breaking down. In addition, employees are required to check these facilities during the day, so if they are in the facilities it doesn't take much effort to re-stock the paper towels.

Idea # 46:

Install video cameras and or change door locks to card reader locks in order to minimize loss by thefts.

Rational:

Existing insurance policy covers replacement of stolen merchandise except for a \$1,000 deductible per incident. In FY 2004 there were a total of 12 incidents of larceny. The value of the goods stolen amounted to less than \$40,000 and most of that amount was covered by insurance. As a result it would not appear to be cost effective to change all the locks at all campuses or to install video camera surveillance equipment at all campuses.

Idea # 50:

Set policy requiring all College communications to be done electronically.

Rational:

The College's Information Technology Advisory Committee is currently studying the implementation of such a policy.